

THE
IMPENDING FATE
OF
TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN,
CONSIDERED.

BY A "HERETICK."

" At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope?'
To which an answer peal'd from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand."

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WILLIAM MCGEE, 18 NASSAU STREET,
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THE IMPENDING FATE OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

It need hardly be remarked, that an Irishman who has good grounds to believe that the priesthood of Rome, and the clergy of the lately disestablished Church, would impartially consign him to everlasting perdition if they only got the chance, must have no small advantage, in the same way of impartiality, in discussing any question at issue between the two denominations. That the writer of the present pamphlet enjoys this independent position, a glance at the title-page will suffice to show. Every one is aware that the question of Irish University Education is the treacherous Pearl Rock now looming ahead of the Government: we are accordingly inundated with *ex-parte* writing on the subject: newspaper articles, magazine articles, pamphlets, and speeches of all dimensions, have been showered upon us in profusion; but it is rare to find one wholly free from sectarian bias. The following pages, proceeding from a writer whose theological "views" would be condemned alike by Cardinal Cullen and by Archbishop Trench, have at all events the merit of discussing the great questions at issue without any special favour to either Protestant or Catholic.

The tremendous blow which has been inflicted on the Ultramontane section of the Roman Catholic Church by Mr. Gladstone's Disestablishing Act, does not seem to have attracted as much attention as its importance really deserves. Whether the effects of that measure have already been, or may yet prove to be, on the whole for good or for evil to the interests of the Protestant religion, is a question on which some of the staunchest supporters of that faith now appear to hold different opinions. But that its influence is for unmixed evil to the interests of Ultramontane Catholicism in Ireland, appears to me to be an absolutely indisputable fact. And, inasmuch as it is not impossible that a misapprehension on this point may lead to sad mischief in the impending educational legislation for this unlucky country, it may be worth while to consider this fact a little more fully; to bring it prominently forward, and to show that it is likely, before long, to lead to a more momentous political change in Ireland than any which has taken place within the memory of man. The impenetrable mystery in which the Cabinet have hitherto wrapped their intended dealings with the University question, renders attention to this important fact all the more essential. We don't know what is before us. A *coup d'etat* may be under consideration; the Liberal party may be taken by surprise. All utterances of the Premier and his subordinates on this subject have been hitherto absolutely enigmatical—in this country, at all events, no clue to their meaning has yet been found.

That the main cause of the enormous power and

influence which the Roman Catholic priesthood has unquestionably wielded in Ireland, for the last forty years, was the formerly Established Church, I entertain no doubt whatever. But to understand the reason for this, we must extend our views beyond this country. The mere fact that a large majority of the Irish peasantry are Roman Catholics would never, of itself, have given their spiritual guides so great and so lasting influence over the Imperial Legislature. No, this influence has had a different source ; it is simply to be ascribed to the steady, uncompromising, unvarying moral support of the great Liberal party in England and Scotland—a support which was indirectly brought about by the ill-starred institution which has so lately passed away.

For, it must not for a moment be supposed that public opinion in England regarded the Irish Establishment from the point of view which it occupied in Ireland, not only in the eyes of its friends, but also in the eyes of its foes. The Irish Liberals, indeed, of all religious denominations, opposed the Established Church ; they considered it an anomalous institution ; that its very existence was a marked slight to the Roman Catholic clergy ; and that, inasmuch as the Catholics formed a large majority of the population, it should, as a matter of common justice, be abolished. But they were, all the time, perfectly alive to the fact that the grievance was in the main “sentimental”—that, as a general rule, Paddy and Mickey got on very well with the Protestant rector ; that they very seldom quarrelled with him ; that the rector’s income was no tax on the peasant ; that its abolition would not

improve by a single sixpence the internal condition of the peasant's pocket ; and that, in time of distress, the Protestant parson, with a by no means plethoric purse, was quite as ready as the Catholic priest to relieve the wants of his poor Catholic parishioners.

All this was well known by the Irish Liberal ; but the case was very different at the other side of the channel. Popular opinion *there* figured to itself the minister of the Establishment as living in a state of chronic warfare with his Catholic neighbours, and levying from the hard-earned wages of the peasantry a heavy tax as payment for his services in pretending to teach them a form of religion which they almost unanimously refused to receive.

But, unfavourable as was this popular opinion in England, it may be regarded as quite complimentary to the Protestant clergy, when we compare it with the views as to their character which prevailed on the Continent. I cannot speak, from my own experience, of the opinion of the Americans concerning the Irish Protestant parson, but, having travelled in most parts of Europe, I can with confidence aver that I have never once found the Irish Establishment regarded as anything short of the crying sin and infamy of England—as an institution the bare tolerance of which was almost sufficient to exclude its aiders and abettors from the pale of civilization. To the German and the Dane, as well as to the Frenchman, the Italian, and the Spaniard, the established Irish parson was invariably a species of irreclaimable gorilla, with evil mind incessantly concentrated on the two processes of consigning the wretched Irish peasant's body

to starvation, and his soul to hell. Had the disestablishing process been effected by an ordinance for the execution of all the Protestant clergy, I sarccely think it would have been regarded abroad as in the least degree too severe.

We need not wonder, then, that the Romish hierarchy, backed as they have been by the moral support of the Liberal party, not only in England, but over the whole Continent of Europe, should have been able to exercise a powerful influence in the Imperial Parliament. Never before, in fact, have the beneficial effects of a substantial grievance to the unfortunate sufferer been more splendidly illustrated. Had the Irish Church been disestablished in 1829, we should in 1871 be hearing but little of the Catholic hierarchy and priesthood; they would long since have sunk into the, comparatively, very subordinate position which their compeers in other Catholic countries at present enjoy.

But this happy state of affairs could not last for ever. The first of January, 1871, has fallen on them like a thunderbolt. At one fell swoop the invaluable grievance has been taken away. Its restoration is hopeless. At last the Irish Catholic stands on perfect equality with his Protestant neighbour. No longer are his priests, in the eyes of Europe, persecuted martyrs, fleeing before the furious faces of gorilla parsons. They have sunk into the contemptible position of free and independent citizens, and must accordingly look for sympathy no more.

And can we look on all this as anything short of a heavy blow and great discouragement to Ultra-

montanism in Ireland? Surely the demolition of an establishment which gave to the most illiberal and overbearing Church in Christendom the sympathy, openly avowed, of the great Liberal party, not only in England, but through the length and breadth of the Continent—I might perhaps say through the entire civilised world—must exercise no small influence in weakening such a Church. Can any one doubt that the anomalous power of the Catholic clergy in Ireland has had an artificial cause? Can any one doubt that there must be some special reason for the fact, that the religion of Rome, everywhere else on the wane, in Ireland flourishes as a green bay tree? Is it not easy to understand that a sensitive population like the Irish, warmly attached to their religion, and seeing that religion daily insulted by the antagonistic faith of a small minority, established by the State and recognised by law, might endeavour to make amends to their clergy for this unmerited slight, by yielding them a profound respect, an implicit obedience, which the Spaniard or the Austrian would indignantly refuse?

To all this, however, Mr. Gladstone has given the death-blow. Time is indeed required for the development of all the effects which may follow on a great political change. But there can be no mistake about the fact, that priestly influence in Ireland is already on the wane, and hence we can see pretty clearly that any Liberal Government which should henceforth consent to a surrender of genuine Liberal principles, in order to curry favour with the Irish hierarchy, would very soon find that they had been

guilty not only of a moral fault, but of a political blunder. Up to the present time all demands from the hierarchy have been received by successive Governments with profound deference ; if possible, granted ; if altogether too unreasonable for concession, refused, but refused with bated breath, and faltering voice, and feeble hands. The fact is simply that the battle which has raged in this country between Protestant and Catholic for three hundred years, and which, so far as their respective clergy are concerned, must rage so long as their distinctive tenets come into contact, has been, ever since the development of liberal opinions, entirely to the disadvantage of the Protestant. The Catholic, Ultramontane as well as Liberal, has been struggling for equality ; the Protestant has been endeavouring to maintain an unjust ascendancy. The Protestant has been therefore resting on an insecure basis, and the Catholic, notwithstanding the vigorous resistance of the old-school Conservative party, has steadily borne him down. The Conservatives were perfectly right in holding, that it was useless to try by concessions to conciliate the hierarchy—in holding that nothing short of absolute supremacy over soul and body of every man, woman, and child in the island could ever content them. The mistake of these politicians was the belief that this most undesirable consummation would be best warded off by refusing the Catholics their just and equal rights, and thus, as we have seen, in reality supplying them with irresistible allies in the field.

To sum the whole matter up, we must admit that

Ultramontane Catholicism and Liberalism, when in union, have proved resistless. But this union had its origin in a mere political accident. The two principles being radically antagonistic, cannot long work harmoniously together. Let the broad platform of complete social equality be once reached by the Catholic, should he then, hoping to pursue his advantage still farther, enter upon a struggle for ascendancy, he would speedily find that the tide of public opinion in England had turned against him; he would find that the moral support he has so long and so steadily received had not its origin in any attachment to the Roman Catholic creed on the part of his supporters; he would find, on the contrary, that it was, in spite of deep-rooted aversion to that creed, and from the love of justice alone, that the Liberal majority in the House of Commons carried Mr. Gladstone's Disestablishing Act.

And, surely, the stage is now in sight where the Protestant can regain firm footing, and extricate himself, at last, from the morass of an effete ascendancy. The Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Irish Church has cleared away the last relic but one of social inequality. About that one a fierce Parliamentary contest will shortly take place, and already many unmistakeable indications have presented themselves of the complete shifting of all the conditions of battle.

This last relic of social inequality is Trinity College, Dublin. The Catholic has here unquestionably a substantial grievance. For, Trinity College—let Governments and priests say what they like—is THE

National University of Ireland. Few educated Irishmen will dispute that Trinity College occupies in Ireland precisely the same place that Oxford and Cambridge occupy in England. The exclusion, therefore, of the Catholic from her Fellowships, and consequently from all share in her government, is a grievance not only sentimental but practical. It is true that Catholic students are admitted to all the advantages and honours of the University except the Fellowships and Foundation Scholarships ; still their number on the roll of students is but small. Can we wonder at this? If there were a University in Dublin governed altogether by Catholics, and principally by Catholic priests, in which all the lecturers and examiners were Catholics, and the majority of these also Catholic priests, but which nevertheless received students of all religious denominations, I think that the number of Protestants who would resort to this imaginary university would be found to be considerably less than the number of Catholic students now on the books of Trinity College.

Admitting, then, the existence of a substantial grievance, it appears pretty obvious to an unprejudiced mind, that a simple repeal of the College Statutes, which at present exclude Dissenters from the Fellowships and Scholarships, would at once meet the difficulty. One might, indeed, look upon such a measure as a simple corollary from the Act of Disestablishment. But, strange to say, though nearly two years and a-half have elapsed since that Act was passed, though the governing body of Trinity College

have intimated their full consent to the admission of the Catholics, and though a bill for the repeal of the disabling statutes has been actually brought into the House of Commons by an independent member, the Catholic still labours under this last remaining grievance.

The cause of this must mainly be ascribed to the Catholic Hierarchy themselves. With the greatest unanimity they refuse to be satisfied with the secularization of Trinity College, and insist on absolute control over the entire university education of the Catholic youth of Ireland, in a college or colleges endowed by the State.

Such is the question at issue. That it has been left so long unsettled may be regarded as indicating not only its extreme difficulty, but also that much diversity of opinion in reference to it prevails among the members of the present Administration.

But it may be doubted whether the battle about to be fought between the supporters of Mixed and of Denominational Education ought, in reality, to be regarded as one between Protestant and Catholic; it would, I conceive, be much nearer the truth to describe it as a struggle between the clergy of both denominations on the one side, and the educated classes of the laity on the other—although the great influence which the Catholic clergy in this country have hitherto exerted over their flocks has a tendency to obscure this fact so long as we confine our attention to the Catholic religion.

Now, it will be readily understood, my standpoint as Heretic being duly considered, that the clergy of

no denomination in Ireland would regard me with any special affection.* And if, on the other hand, I should myself profess any considerable amount of attachment to their respected body, I fear it would be a slight deviation from the narrow path of truth. It is therefore with a clear conscience I can affirm, that in making the following remarks I have been influenced by no prejudice in favour of clerical views.

It appears to me, then, that the clergy are very hardly dealt with by the laity with respect to this same educational question. Orthodox Jones thinks nothing of going to church, joining heartily in the most damnatory of the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian Creed, and, on his way home, abusing with equal heartiness and more vociferousness, the narrow-minded bigotry of the parson for supporting the denominational system of education. What can Orthodox Jones be thinking of? Can he really believe what he has been just now repeating in

* I have reason to believe, that to the clerical mind what they call "heresy" is an object of far greater abhorrence than open infidelity. I don't know whether anyone has observed the *climax* which occurs in one of the Anglican Collects for Good Friday—a beautiful and affecting prayer it is, too, and contrasts amazingly with the clumsy, long-winded effusions which our revered Archbishops sometimes put forth on occasions of public calamity. It is a supplication for mercy "upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks." Here the Jew, who stands at the foot of the series, is plainly the least objectionable. *He*, at all events, worships one God, and recognizes the Divine authority of the Old Testament. Next comes the Turk, inferior to the Jew; for, though a Monotheist, his views regarding the Prophet of God are decidedly unsound. Worse again is the Infidel, who worships no God at all. But at the head of the black list stands the abhorred and abominable "Heretick," "the crowning summit of Human Scoundrelism, which painfully sticks in the mind."

church?—"Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Can he, in the teeth of this momentous dogma, charge his spiritual pastor and master with bigotry, for simply striving to obtain for the young people committed to his charge the best means in his power to ensure the avoidance of a misbelief which such fearful consequences attend? Can he blame the clergyman for straining every nerve to obtain complete control over every item of the education by which the young mind is moulded; and that faith formed which, by his own admission, must work everlasting weal or woe?

And these remarks are just as applicable to the Catholic as to the Protestant. I know it is a common weakness of all rival churches, that each one speaks of an active and energetic clergyman belonging to their own body as "zealous," while another, equally active and energetic, but belonging to a different body, is "bigoted." Perhaps it would be nearer the truth—certainly it would be more charitable—to give them all credit for their zeal.

The fact is simply, that the whole question between Mixed and Denominational Education lies in a nutshell, but the disputants on both sides shrink from stating it articulately. The whole force of Denominationalism rests on one proposition. With the truth of that proposition it stands or falls, and here it is—*The future welfare of each individual, that is to say, the avoidance of an eternity of torture, and the acquisition of an eternity of joy, requires, as an essential condition, correctness of belief in certain dogmas of religion.*

If this proposition be true, Denominationalism is safe ; for, no one disputes the fact that the religious belief of each individual is, almost always, fixed by his education ; nor can it be doubted that a system which gives the clergy of each denomination absolute control over the entire educational course, is much more favourable for the inculeation of religious dogmas than the rival educational method, which allows religious instruction only at definite times, and under certain considerable restrictions.

It is obvious, then, that the zealous clergy of all denominations *cannot*, if they choose to be consistent, be content with anything short of complete control over the intellectual and moral training of all the young within their reach. They must, therefore, pertinaciously oppose every system of mixed education, and will doubtless continue their opposition as long as the faintest hope of success remains. The histories of the Queen's Colleges, the National Education Board, and the Church Education Society, afford obvious illustrations of the truth of this remark.

The proposition stated above, as that on which the fate of Denominational Education depends, meets with very different degrees of acceptance in the different ranks of society. We should not be far astray in laying down, as a general rule, that its truth is firmly believed by the clergy of all denominations, by women, and by the peasantry ; that by the great majority of the educated laity it is openly professed, but secretly disbelieved, while by a small minority this disbelief is openly avowed.

It is, I think, this strange attitude of the laity

which renders the issue of the battle between the two rival educational systems in the slightest degree doubtful. If all those laymen who in heart disbelieve the proposition were only to speak out their minds without reserve, the controversy would not last a month. Its denial cuts the ground from under the feet of the Denominationalist. The objections to united education spring from dogmatical considerations exclusively. A few extreme sects of obscure fanatics have, indeed, from time to time divested the inculcation of a pure morality, even from the teaching of Jesus Christ. But all the larger communities which divide the Christian world are pretty nearly agreed as to questions which are purely moral. Were the unreasonable preponderance which all divines assign to mere dogmatical correctness once removed, no bar to United Education on moral grounds could, even with the slightest plausibility, be raised.

Accordingly, it rests with the educated laity to decide whether the rising generation of this distracted country are to be consigned, for the purposes of "higher education," to denominational colleges; each individual to be brought up in the old traditions of hatred to every one who rejects his particular creed. It is impossible for a man to preserve much love for his neighbour, if he is persistently taught that his neighbour is going to hell; and not merely going there himself, but doing his best to draw others after him. At last has the point been reached where the Liberal majority of the House of Commons must pause in their course of concession to the Irish

hierarchy. They must do so at least if they would true to their own principles. At last has the Irish Protestant been pushed back to ground where he finds good footing for the impending battle. At last has the hierarchy been thrust down from the vantage-ground of Liberal sympathy with a *bond-fide* grievance. At last may the House of Commons look them steadily in the face, and resist an unreasonable demand. The House of Commons may venture to assure them that full justice shall be done to all Catholics, but that they must look for nothing more; that the gates of the great national University of Ireland shall be thrown open to them; that the Catholic shall compete with the Protestant, on terms of perfect equality, for his share in her honours, her emoluments, and her government. But if this does not content them, they must be informed, at once and decisively, that the State, which in the earlier years of the present century, repudiated for this country denominational education, will not in its advanced age take a retrograde step, by endowing denominational colleges, the nurseries of religious bigotry and social strife.

But we have seen that objections to Mr. Fawcett's Bill are not confined to the Catholic party. Two such objections have been specially urged from the Protestant side—first, that the secularization of Trinity College would interfere with the religious training which the lay Protestant students now enjoy; secondly, that the connection of the professional Divinity School with the College would be broken.

The latter of these objections presents no for-

midable difficulty. It must be remembered that, although Trinity College was originally founded as, in the main, a theological institution, the teaching of theology has long ceased to be her principal function. Dr. Haughton, strangely enough, remarks that "Trinity College has been well described by her enemies as a handful of Protestant clergymen." But, in reality, the Divinity School has dwindled to such an extent as to be, numerically, one of the least important of the professional schools in the College. There seems to be no good reason why this school should not retain her present place in the University after the new reforms—it being, of course, provided that those Fellows only who profess the Protestant Episcopalian religion should interfere in its management. For, considering the large endowment still left to Maynooth College by the Irish Church Act, no Catholic could reasonably complain if the very moderate sum now expended on the Divinity School were still to be charged on the revenues of Trinity College; and we have seen already, that the time for paying attention to unreasonable complaints has passed away.

The former objection, relating to the interference with the religious training of the lay Protestant students, requires more consideration. To discuss it aright, we must examine what is the exact amount of religious instruction the lay student now receives. This may be considered as coming from two sources: first, from the daily services in the College Chapel; and, secondly, from the catechetical lectures which students professing the Episcopalian Protestant

religion are required to attend during a portion of their undergraduate course. Let us examine these separately.

As for the first, it must be admitted as an unquestionable fact, that the College bell rings very regularly for a quarter of an hour every morning and evening, and that at the close of this performance, the appropriate service for the day is read in the chapel. Even Dr. Woodlock, the Rector of the Catholic University in Dublin, admits that the chapel of Trinity College is "the representative of a holy idea ; it announces to the Protestant youth who crosses the threshold of that University, that learning, to be fruitful of good, must be based upon religion." Mr. Pim, also, in his speech on the University (Dublin) Tests Bill, asks, "What is to be done with the College Chapel? Are the daily, or even the weekly, services to be kept up?"

This regular daily performance of divine service in the chapel certainly sounds well ; and yet, I think, that a short statistical survey of its results may, perhaps, lead us to doubt its benefits. It appears that a regular record of the attendance of both Fellows and students is kept in the chapel. Four of the students have certain duties to perform in connection with the chapel service, and are subject to heavy pecuniary penalties in case of non-attendance ; and one of the clerical Fellows or Professors must attend, in rotation, to read the service. Now, I have ascertained from this register, that during the six weeks of College lectures in the last Term, (Trinity, 1871,) the average attendance of the students at

morning service in the chapel (the *ex-officio* assistants being deducted) was *less than three*, the precise average being 2.78378; while the average attendance of the Fellows and Professors, taken together, was *considerably less than one*—the exact figures being 0.29729.

I think it cannot be denied that, when we take into account the fact that, during these six weeks, several hundreds of students were in attendance on College lectures, these figures are somewhat startling, and certainly show that the religious benefit which ninety-nine out of every hundred of the students derive from the daily chapel service is strictly confined to the sound of the bell. Dr. Woodlock, no doubt, would hold that the students are likely to derive less mischief from listening to the bell than from attending the service; and I think that few Protestants will maintain that the persistent reading of morning prayer to long rows of empty benches is likely to be of much good to religion.

The Sunday morning service is well attended, and there is no reason why it should be suppressed, even in the reformed College. The Catholic students, as soon as they became sufficiently numerous, could have their own Sunday service at a different hour. As for the daily services, they should be immediately discontinued, even if Trinity College were not to be interfered with at all. They are simply calculated to bring religious worship into contempt.

With respect to the second source of religious instruction available for lay Protestant students—namely, the catechetical lectures—we must observe,

that it is only during the first two years of his undergraduate course the student receives any such instruction. With the close of his second year, his theological training is presumed complete; and for the remainder of his university career, Trinity College takes no more notice of his religious development than if he were a Mahommedan or a Buddhist. And even in these junior years, so small is the number of lectures (about ten in each year) on which attendance is required, that little difficulty would be experienced in maintaining them after the opening of the College, by means of the Protestant clerical Fellows connected with the Divinity School.

In considering this whole objection, it must be distinctly borne in mind, that the two sources of religious instruction specified above, are the only sources available for the student. It was, therefore, with some surprise I read a passage in a pamphlet, which is usually ascribed to the present highly-respected Provost of Trinity College, in which he speaks of the secularization of the College as depriving the members of the (then) Established Church of the privilege "which they now possess and prize—that, namely, of having the religious instruction of their sons provided for and imparted along with their secular teaching." This is likely to lead to a misapprehension of the facts. The secular teaching in Trinity College is *not* imparted with the religious teaching. The two departments are wholly distinct. I am sure there is not a single Fellow of the College, clerical or lay, who would not now consider himself to be guilty of a gross breach of trust, if, while delivering a secular

lecture to a necessarily mixed class of students, he were to introduce any remarks in the slightest degree bearing upon theological questions.

It may, indeed, be said that the Protestant student may, and often does, consult his tutor with respect to his reading, and that he may thus have the benefit of his advice on theology as well as on secular subjects. He certainly may and does ; but this is altogether a private matter between tutor and pupil, with which no legislation could interfere, and which would subsist just as fully and as freely after the secularization of the College as it does at present.

The appointment of the Provost is considered by some to present a serious difficulty in the way of Mr. Fawcett's Bill. But it would disappear at once, if the Crown would consent to restore to the Fellows their original statutable right of electing the head of the College. So long as the majority of the Fellows, and presumably of the students, remained Protestants, the Fellows would doubtless, and reasonably, elect a Protestant ; should the majority at any time become Catholic, that majority would be able, and, no doubt, equally willing, to elect a man of their own faith. It is true, that under the existing circumstances of the College, many years must elapse before there could be even a possibility of a majority of Catholic Fellows. Whether anything could be done to meet this difficulty, by allowing some of the present Fellows to retire on pensions, in case any of them should choose to resign, might be well worth considering on the part of the Government—more especially, as it is believed that a large sum of money will be shortly

payable to the College, under the Irish Church Act, as compensation for Advowsons.

The difficulty of keeping the peace between Protestant and Catholic Clerical Fellows is urged by Mr. Pim in his speech above referred to. But this objection appears to be wholly chimerical. It is not at all likely that any Catholic priests will appear on the roll of the Fellows ; indeed, it is plain from the attitude of the hierarchy, that should a priest present himself as a candidate for a Fellowship, his suspension or degradation from his Orders would very speedily follow.

But Mr. Pim goes further, and asserts that it would be impossible to preserve harmony among the Protestant and Catholic students in the Secularised University, and he accounts for the notorious fact, that the utmost good feeling has always existed in the College between the two denominations, by the exclusive nature of the government of the College. "I maintain," he says, "that this harmony and good feeling has existed only because the government of the College has been in the hands of one party exclusively." He proceeds : "You cannot unite Protestants and Roman Catholics on equal terms in an educational establishment of any kind. I am told that this is done elsewhere ; but I am sure that it cannot be done, for the present at least, in Ireland." To this I reply, the experiment has never yet been tried in this country. While the Irish Church Establishment lasted, no Irish Protestant and Irish Catholic stood on equal terms ; but now,

that the Establishment has been abolished, it remains to be seen whether there is any impossibility in Protestants and Catholics being united on equal terms in an educational establishment, without coming to blows.

In conclusion, I may remark, that for several years to come, any legislation on University Education in Ireland must be, to a great extent, of an *experimental* character. And this is in itself a strong reason for introducing unavoidable changes with as little disturbance as possible to the existing educational institutions. It is inconceivable that so sweeping a measure as the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the State Church of three hundred years' standing, should not be attended with momentous consequences. It may have consequences which no politician could anticipate. It will surely work great changes in the modes of thought and feeling of the middle classes of society—those very classes which are mainly interested in the University question. We are, in fact, in a period of transition; and at such a period, to introduce any extensive alterations into our University system would be most inopportune. To carry out Mr. Fawcett's plan would merely require a few slight alterations in the existing College statutes. Not so the rival scheme of instituting a cumbersome system of Denominational Colleges, which, after their function of setting the youth of Ireland by the ears had once been clearly ascertained, would still remain unlovely excrescences on the soil, and with a multitude of "vested interests" to be re-

spected, before they could be abolished from the face of the earth.

No scheme, indeed, is without its difficulties; and the friends of the secularization of Trinity College will doubtless have their full share to contend with. They will have to meet the united opposition of two bodies of ecclesiastics, who, agreeing in little, except the inevitable perdition of each other, will unite on the common platform of Zeal for Dogma. To this, they are bound by their fundamental principle, to sacrifice everything else. To endeavour to conciliate them by concession is worse than useless; each concession leads only to fresh demands. Steadiness in resisting what is plainly unreasonable is the only safe course. We all know that a man's demands are greatly influenced by his chances of success. His knowledge that it is perfectly useless to ask for a thing, will usually keep him from asking for it. We never find the Protestant clergy going as far as the Roman Catholic priests in attempted control of the laity. And why? Not because their principles would not lead them to try it, but because they know that the laity would treat any such move with ridicule.

I presume that it is the wish of all Liberal laymen that the youth of this country should be trained in the belief that men may honestly differ in their religious opinions, and yet be good and estimable members of society—and in the disbelief that one form of creed alone is the narrow path to heaven, every other the broad road to hell. I would recom-

mend any such Liberal layman, before giving his support to denominational education to read with care the following words of the ablest Roman Catholic priest in Great Britain :—

“It [the Church] claims to know its own limits, and to decide what it can determine absolutely and what it cannot. It claims, moreover, to have a hold upon statements not directly religious, so far as this, to determine whether they indirectly relate to religion, and, according to its own definitive judgment, to pronounce whether or not, in a particular case, they are consistent with revealed truth. It claims to decide magisterially, whether infallibly or not, that such and such statements are or are not prejudicial to the Apostolic *depositum* of faith, in their spirit or in their consequences, and to allow them, or condemn and forbid them, accordingly. It claims to impose silence at will on any matters, or controversies, of doctrine, which, on its own *ipse dixit*, it pronounces to be dangerous, or inexpedient, or inopportune. It claims that whatever may be the judgment of Catholics upon such acts, these acts should be received by them with those outward marks of reverence, submission, and loyalty, which Englishmen, for instance, pay to the presence of their Sovereign, without public criticism on them, as being in their matter inexpedient, or in their manner violent or harsh. And lastly, it claims to have the right of inflicting spiritual punishment, of cutting off from the ordinary channels of the divine life, and of simply excommunicating, those who refuse to submit themselves to its formal declarations.”

Thus writes John Henry Newman. And now, I ask, what can be the meaning of the name “Liberal,” when applied to a man who lends his support to the system of spiritual, moral, and, by a necessary consequence, temporal despotism here explicitly laid down—a system which would annihilate all intellectual freedom, and hand us over, body and soul, into

the dead hand of the Church. Let those who admire this system, consistently support denominational education. But let those who repudiate such slavish views, endeavour to counteract the influence of exclusive ecclesiastical teaching, by securing, as an antidote, a united secular education for the different religious denominations of Irish youth—

“And so shall peace her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma ’tween their amities.”

